

---

# THE LITERARY FOCUS.

---

Vol. I.—Miami University, Oxford, O. August, 1827.—No. 3.

---

*"Stilus optimus, et praestantissimus dicendi effector ac magister."*

---

Edited and published by the Erodelphian and Union Literary Societies.

---

## MELANCHOLY.

"As a beam o'er the face of the waters  
may glow,  
While the tide runs in darkness and  
coldness below,  
So the cheek may be tinged with a  
warm sunny smile,  
Though the cold heart to ruin runs  
darkly the while."

Perhaps there is no person who has not at times felt a strange sadness and gloominess of spirit rest upon him, that has arisen from some collateral circumstances, or has been produced by the wildness of his own cogitations. It gives a gloomy expression to the countenance, and infuses a wild and romantic enthusiasm into the whole character. Although it creates sensations truly painful, yet it is often a sublime and luxurious feeling, which we love to indulge. It often exercises the tenderest sentiments of our nature, and it has aided in transforming a callous heart into one of the most exquisite sensibility: but if indulged to excess, it terminates in moping sadness or the ravings of despair. The strongest minds often bow beneath its sway; it rests like an incubus on the soul that could resist the powers of earth besides; and the gay heart that apparently knew nothing but smiles and sunshine, is suddenly enveloped with lowering clouds, and a shower of tears can alone release it from its sad reverie. It comes on us by stealth, and its power is irresistible. It is this, that amidst the convivial scene, while the sparkling glass goes joyously round the festive board, when other hearts are beating in unison with the general strain, raises a plaintive sigh from one to jar the harmony of soul, or causes a

silent tear to flow, indicating that all is not right within. It is this, that in the silent shade of midnight raises the agonizing wail of woe, or lights in the youthful breast the holy blaze of enthusiasm.

It was in a mood of contemplative melancholy that I wandered along the margin of a river that beautifully adorns the magnificent forests of a neighboring state, at one time meandering among the most fertile vales, and at another rolling majestically through the sublimest scenery. My mind was now enjoying the grandeur that was so profusely scattered from the bountiful hand of nature, and then was wafted back to the "home of my fathers" and my bosom companions, that were far—far away, when my attention was suddenly arrested by a sad and plaintive voice from the top of a high peak, immediately above me. I stopped and gazed for a moment in silent observation, when I discovered a tall and majestic form, with highly wrought features, and a countenance upon which was depicted the darkest gloom and saddest melancholy, carelessly reclining against an aged beach. He was pouring forth querulous complaints to the passing breeze, while his eyes were stedfastly fixed upon the blue expanse above. I listened, while he breathed from the dark recesses of his heart the tale of his woes and the fitful emotions of his reverie. The most of what he uttered has been lost by the distance of time and change of situation, but portions of it are still written in indelible characters on the tablets of my heart.

"Spirit of sadness"—said he—"stretch your gloomy wings over my soul, brood

upon it and hatch your direst train of melancholies; I fear you not; I have felt your worst power—yet sweet is it when compared with what else I have suffered; it is the only recreation of my heart, and the pastime of my mind. When I take a view of my life, what has it been but one continued scene of misfortune and sorrow? My mother, who once smoothed the pillow of sickness, wiped the sweat from my feverish brow, and kissed off the falling tear-drop of sorrow, now is palsied by the hand of death, and sleeps silent and regardless of me in the cold bosom of the grave. My father has gone to the "land of his sires," and left me a hapless orphan, held down by the iron grasp of meagre poverty, and scarcely afloat upon the surface of an unfeeling and uncharitable world. My sister—but ah! her sainted spirit cannot, or she would, lend an attentive ear to my sighs; in her tender heart expired the last sympathizing glow that was ever-lit for me; the world has no charms or endearments bereft of her—ought besides is heartless and unfeeling.—Cursed monster! Why were you not merciful? Or why not let me die with her? It would have disarmed you of half your terrors; we would have shared your pangs together, and gladly spurned a world of sorrow. But no, we must have the death of parting, and the death of separation, and to me is only granted the pitiful privilege of wandering disconsolate and alone. I mingled with society, but every countenance was marked with deep duplicity; self-interest, deceit, fawning adulation to the great, and insolent cruelty to the weak, characterized every action. I shrank with instinctive horror from a scene in which I was not prepared to play my part. I sought a friend who would divide the burden of my sorrows, and make his heart but another of my own: and such I vainly hoped I had found; but he proved false—false as the "father of lies." He approached me with an open hand, but a deceitful heart; he turned my confi-

dence into ridicule, and made me an object of contempt, by abusing my respect for him, and exposing my weakness to the world. Then I withdrew to the shades of retirement. I applied myself with unremitting assiduity to the study of the classic and the abstruse theorems of mathematics; and fondly hoped to gather wisdom from the musty and moth-eaten volumes of antiquity, and to store my mind with legendary lore. Oft has the midnight lamp grown pale while I watched and meditated, and my eye become dim with the lucubrations of successive years. I devoured, with insatiable avidity, the productions of both ancient and modern date, until I imagined I was able to hold an equal hand with the aspirants of the world. I sought the shrine of power; and where I expected to find patronage and protection, I met with haughty and supercilious treatment, wanton and cruel insult, or a cold and formal reception, worse than open repulse. My heart sickened with disappointment, and I withered from the gaze of irresistible opposition. At last I believed I had found the true source of happiness: my youthful heart was charmed and my wandering affections concentrated and formed upon a fair one, whom I esteemed the great paragon of beauty; in whom I fondly imagined were admirably blended all the virtues denied to the rest of the world. I avowed my passion in the genuine language of true and lasting love. I told her she was the only being upon earth with whom I would unite my destiny, and that the heaven of our joys should be a lone and secluded home, free from the noise of the world and the wiles of designing men. She benignantly smiled upon me, and said, "we will be happy in each other." But on the very day appointed for the consummation of my bliss, I heard her epithalamium sung, and saw her hand joined with another, whose only attraction was wealth, and whose only accomplishment a deceitful heart and lying tongue."—As he pronounced this

sentence he stood erect, and smote upon his breast with the energy of desperation. His features grew horribly wild as he raised his hand to his head and concluded—"My God! the cup of my sorrow is full; my mind is turning green with melancholy—my breast will burst with gall. I will abjure the haunts of men; the hooting of the owl and the howling of the wolf shall be the lullaby of my repose—the growling bear and the shrill shrieking panther shall sing the requiem over my grave!"—Then swift as an arrow he rushed thro' the thicket, and buried himself in the deep shades of the forest.

Sometime after I returned from my tour in the West, I was on a visit at my friend's in Cincinnati, when I accidentally came in contact with a person whom I immediately recognized as the romantic and melancholy character I had seen in the western wilds. I sought his company through motives of curiosity, and after we had become sufficiently acquainted, I mentioned the circumstance related above. After a few expressions of surprise, that any human eye had witnessed that scene, and a blush of instinctive modesty, he proceeded to inform me, that having wandered a long time amidst forests never before trodden by white man, subsisting on whatever came fortuitously in his way, endeavoring to forget his griefs and even himself, he found that entire solitude was more insupportable than society in the very worst form; that half the good feelings of our nature are lost in the want of intercourse and communion of man with man; and that he had found it easier to beguile the hours of wretchedness by conversing with the meanest being that bears the human form, than to be left to the perplexity of his own reflections, or to the harrowings of remorse and despair; that he had learned from sad experience, that happiness need not be sought in the gilded palaces of the great, the gloomy cell of the recluse or the lonely hut of the hermit; and that the heart which does not pos-

sess, within itself, the means of happiness, might despair of obtaining it from any possible combination of external circumstances. He concluded by saying, that he had at length returned to the abodes of man full of these convictions, and that for the remainder of his days he would endeavor to make himself contented with whatever lot Heaven should send him.

After this I often saw him mingle with the gayest circles, and apparently lose himself in the midst of social mirth. To a superficial observer his countenance wore the smile of joy; but to me a lurking sadness and dissatisfaction were visible, and the bumper toast often washed down the half suppressed sigh, that was rising to tell a tale of gloomy sorrow.

Such I have seen to be the miseries of melancholy when indulged to excess; and to such evils are men daily subjecting themselves without the least shadow of sufficient excuse. P.

---

*Remarks on the removal of the black population of the United States.*

(CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 28.)

There is another circumstance which will tend to increase the evil that has just been mentioned:—land, cultivated by slaves, will not afford the means of subsistence to the same number of persons, as when cultivated by the proprietor himself, or by tenants under him. Slaves have no interest in the improvement of the property on which they labor for their masters. There is nothing like the same demand for mechanics and tradesmen; and consequently towns and villages are more rare; and even supposing that the slave cultivators had the same energy and enterprize as the free, when the country is divided into large plantations, each possessed by some rich proprietor and superintended by his overseer, the produce will not be so great, nor the land so well cultivated, as when each of these large tracts is subdivided, and these small farms of 50 or 100 acres, placed under the care of a ten-



ant. Were facts wanting to confirm this reasoning, we might adduce some parts of the state of Maryland. In that state you may see districts of country possessing equal natural advantages—but part cultivated by slaves and part by freemen: and the latter many times more valuable than the former. The proprietors of farms containing an equal number of acres, in districts thus distinguished by the state of the laborers, are in very different circumstances. He who cultivates his land by freemen lives in abundance, and has his buildings and plantations in the best order. The slave holder will complain that his “boys” do not support themselves, and inform you how many hundred bushels of corn he purchased during the last year, to supply them with food. In Kentucky, you will frequently hear the same complaints from the cultivator by slave labor. Nor is this surprising: “there are two motives of human industry, the hope of enjoyment, and the fear of suffering.” The slave is actuated almost entirely by the latter. But the former is the principle to which all successful legislators have addressed themselves. This is the basis on which the prosperity of free nations rests; and civilization and wealth will always advance in proportion as security of property and freedom in its disposal, are enjoyed by the community. To govern men by fear has often been attempted; the experiment has been tried on a grand scale, and the result has always been unfortunate. The blaze of pomp and royalty may cast a sickly smile over the scene; but go to the mass of the people—visit the cottage of the peasant, and want and wretchedness in every form—misery in every shape, will be presented as the groundwork of the edifice which boasts of so showy an exterior; but which within is corruption and rottenness. If then political slavery palsies the efforts of men, and involves the great body of the people in distress and poverty, how much more that

which treats the human being as the brute creation, and levels the rational with the irrational creature of God. Man's physical force is very far inferior to that of many of the lower orders of creation; it is mind, which gives him his superiority: and when we rob him of this by imprisoning his faculties and degrading his nature, he is comparatively a useless being. The savage of New Holland meets with more difficulty in providing the means of a scanty subsistence, than the animals of mere instinct around him. There indeed, man also is a mere animal, and of the lowest order; since he has not the guidance of instinct, in the absence of understanding. Slavery will and does make creatures of the same kind, of those who are under its deadening influence. And so far as the exercise of the intellect remains with men sunk so low, it will be unfavorable to those who expect to derive profit from their labor. Is it reasonable to think, that a man who knows that his support is certain, however diminished his production may be—who feels that he is not to enjoy the fruits of his labor, and that his comforts will be the same, whether the harvest be abundant or not; is it natural to suppose that such a being will exert his strength more than is absolutely unavoidable, when all his toil and sweat serve only to increase the wealth and supply the luxury of the man, whom he must look upon as his oppressor? “A person who can acquire no property, can have no interest but to eat as much and labor as little as possible.” The labor of the slave in many parts of the Union, will not refund to the master the expense of his food and clothing. In cotton and sugar plantations the proceeds are so great as to bear even this weight. We know that the free laborer is equally supported by the employer; or speaking more accurately, his own industry is the means of his support; but the wages he receives in return for his labor, must supply food and clothing

for himself and family. The situation of the two individuals however is very different. The freeman has every motive to economise: increase of comforts in future, a higher rank in society and the condition of his posterity. On the slave none of these operate. Besides, we are willing to grant, that in our country, the expense of a day's labor of a freeman is greater than that of the slave's for the same length of time—but we say, that the products of his toil bear a still higher proportion to those of the negro's. In Hungary, before the reform introduced by Maria Theresa, the labor of the serf was wholly the property of the landed proprietor. The Empress reduced the proprietor's right to two days in the week; and this change was beneficial to all parties. The nobles soon discovered, that the labor of these two days was more efficient and more valuable, than that of the whole week had been previously. Here we have a fact bearing directly upon the subject; the serfs of Hungary were bought and sold with the soil, and their situation in some particulars resembled that of our slaves, though not so low: yet these men when admitted to even a partial enjoyment of their rights, were able, when working cheerfully, to perform more than thrice the quantity of labor which had been accomplished in their degraded and servile state. Free laborers are stimulated to exertion by the knowledge that their industry will be rewarded; their wages will be proportioned to their diligence. In the slave, emulation and activity are never roused. In that stage of society, when population is pressing upon the means of subsistence, the free laborer is reduced to the bare necessities of life: in such circumstances, slave labor will be the more expensive. The slave must have subsistence for himself and family; the freeman has no more; and besides will husband his little stock and save to the utmost of his power. The conduct of the slave will be of the opposite description. The laborers of

our own country are yet far removed from the state just mentioned. As yet there is abundance of new land which may be brought into cultivation, and wages are high. The industrious classes are able to obtain not only the necessities and some of the comforts of life, but also gradually to accumulate their savings, and become themselves proprietors. Although this be true, the time when the wages of industry will barely support the laborer, is approaching; and it is not necessary that this period should be very near to make the burden of slaves to be felt. For this purpose, it is sufficiently near in all the states North of Maryland at the present time; they could not be cultivated by slaves, even if the laws permitted. And even in Maryland, the opinion is pretty general, that slaves are a loss to their owners: and in proportion as population becomes dense, this conviction will be enforced upon those who possess this kind of property. In England, if the laws permitted slave-holding, it could not exist: a "gang" of slaves would in a very short time bring ruin upon the farmer who should attempt thus to cultivate his land. In that country, as with us, there were few that questioned the justice of slavery until this species of property became unprofitable; and a very strong proof that such is the case at present in almost every state of the Union, is the unanimity which prevails with regard to the removal of the black portion of our population; we rejoice to see this disposition evincing itself, from whatever source it may arise; we think that the whole nation should feel a deep interest in the subject; and we congratulate ourselves upon the prospect of a national, united and continued effort to remove the only serious obstacle to our prosperity as a nation. Who can estimate the increase of wealth and power which will result from the cultivation of the Southern states by free laborers? We may form some slight conception of the advantages which will flow from this change,

by referring to the state of the different countries of Europe before and after the downfall of the feudal system. So highly do we estimate the benefits of this revolution, that, bloody as were the commotions in France—horrible as were their atrocities and outrages upon humanity, the overthrow of the ancient system of feuds and the creation of a large number of small proprietors were, in our opinion, cheaply purchased, even at this vast expense of blood and human suffering.

But some object, that all this is very plausible in *theory*, but impossible in *practice*; they tell us, that whites cannot endure the fatigue of cultivation in Southern climates. We answer, that this is only an assertion without proof. The human system can be habituated to any climate from the Equator to the Pole; and that the Southern part of the United States is an exception, is contradicted by fact: since there is already a large number of whites in those states—as well laborers as gentlemen. Whether free laborers may be had in sufficient number to supply the place of the slaves as they are removed, is a question which deserves more consideration; and that we have no cause for great anxiety on this head, we may be assured, when we reflect, that where capital is abundant, the want of laborers will soon be supplied: and that the removal of the blacks must be gradual. The degraded state of the industrious classes, when their functions are performed by slaves, will be an obstacle; but this, however serious at first, will become less so, in proportion as slavery is diminished. Indeed we think, that by proper management, it may be in a great measure removed. If the slave-holders would permit their negroes to acquire and possess property, and give them a certain portion of their time—say two days in the week—to labor for themselves, we have every reason to believe, from human nature and from the fact related respecting the Hungarian serfs, and from other facts of the same kind, that the mas-

ters would derive more profit from their industry, than in the present state of things. The slave also would be greatly benefitted; his condition would be much less degraded, and by this means the distance between the free laborer and the slave would be much diminished; and it would not be so humiliating to freemen to descend to the same employment with the African. Nor would this be the only or the principal advantage which would result to the proprietors of slaves, from such a limitation of their rights. If these privileges were granted to the negroes on condition, that when they had acquired sufficient property, they should purchase their freedom and emigrate to Africa, we might in the course of one or two generations, be completely freed from the black population, without the slightest violation of the rights of any; and if it be objected, that the improvidence of their habits renders it extremely improbable, that the blacks would accumulate sufficient property for attaining their liberty, this will not apply to all; and the comfortable condition of those who avail themselves of the opportunity presented to them, will incite others to the same course. Habits of economy and foresight will spring up as the blacks are roused from the torpor, by which all their faculties are now possessed; and however probable an unfortunate result of the experiment may appear, it is certainly worthy of a trial; since all history and all our knowledge of human nature favor the opinion, that if a certain fixed portion alone of the slave's time were the property of his master, this part would be more profitable than the whole. Besides, to remove an evil of such magnitude as the existence of slaves amongst us, every means should be tried. The absence of every colored man makes room for a white citizen; and the whole republic will thus be strengthened. The South is undoubtedly the most vulnerable part of the United States.—If a foreign power should land a sufficient



force to overcome any immediate resistance, and to maintain his position for some length of time; and should proclaim liberty to the slaves, and invite them to join his standard, we tremble for the consequences. That a "servile war" is not to be despised, we have warning in the Roman history, and more particularly in the fate of St. Domingo. Our best interests therefore imperiously demand our utmost exertions in the removal of the colored population. To the existence of slavery amongst us, foreigners point and predict the downfall of our government. This is the rotten part of our system; exterminate this one evil, and, though our republic may be subject to vicissitudes—to seasons of adversity as well as prosperity, there will be every appearance of stability in our free institutions; and we may transmit them to our posterity with the cheering hope, that they will hand them down to their successors through countless generations.

Z.

### THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE.

The singular, yet unexplained influence, that climate exercises over matter and its properties, has been observed and remarked upon in all ages. A tree or plant that in one country yields in abundance its productions, when removed a few degrees out of the latitude in which it has been accustomed to grow, soon perishes and falls into decay.

Animals that in one region are so wild and fierce, as to resist all attempts to tame them, migrating into an atmosphere of a different temperature, become harmless and mild as the most inoffensive of the brute creation. The serpent, that in other quarters of the globe, is considered man's greatest and most implacable enemy, himself alone excepted—travellers tell us in Macedonia is given as a plaything to children, and suffers itself to be handled as rudely and seems to take as much precaution against injuring its thought-

less companions, as an affectionate spaniel.

No where in the world is this influence of climate more remarkable than in America. Born in a land by far the largest quarter of earth on the globe, covered with immense mountains, lakes and rivers, the soul of an American is expanded from his birth, and imbibes in infancy and at the breast of his mother, those high notions of freedom, and that contempt for every thing like submission and dependance, which characterize him in so great a degree when he has acquired the age of manhood. Hence a rough boldness and freedom of manners that disguises the real goodness of heart that lurks beneath, and give them, to strangers, the appearance of rudeness, conceit and unfriendliness of disposition. A foreigner of distinction, who has been accustomed to meet in every third face, the humble and submissive countenance of a menial, conscious of inferiority, is surprised and disgusted, when he lands upon our shore, with the confident gaze, the unconcerned and indifferent look with which he is every where saluted, and is constantly constrained to cry out with Goldsmith's Chinese, "Fum thou son of Fo what sort of a people am I amongst." Yet no nation is more universally hospitable, and the history of her wars demonstrate that none are more merciful, more generous, or more brave. None more patient of injuries, yet none so certain and sure of resentment. Confine him in prison, an American is the last to despond and every expedient that is in the reach of human power he will try to effect his escape. Inflict a wound upon his honour, he will revenge it deeper than an attempt upon his life. In a word as was once said of the British, whatever man dares do in circumstances of danger, he will accomplish. What is not to be expected of such a people? Accordingly we find that America is rapidly advancing in the race of nations, and with hasty strides assuming the position she must

occupy at the head of the civilized world. The wise system of internal improvement is increasing her strength, while the cautious and prudent policy of her statesmen protects her external relations, more effectually even than the fear of her arms. The consequence is that we have more peace at home than most other nations; and notwithstanding the reproaches thrown out by the envious and malicious, concerning our slave system, and other evils of the like nature—the misfortunes of which all are ready to admit—we are as true and genuine republicans, as reason shall ever be able to produce—and though we may sometimes, fall out and disagree—nay, even “come to blows” amongst ourselves, it is but the overflowing of that unrestrainable impulse for freedom of *thinking and acting*, which we inherit from our birth.

S. S.

### HAPPINESS.

To discover, that man was not created to enjoy any considerable degree of happiness in this world, but is doomed to meet with disappointment and misery in his journey through life, we need only look around us. True it is, in the bright sunshine of youth, our prospects may be fair and our expectations great; yet when we enter into the busy scenes of life, we frequently find, that the former fade, and the latter are never realized.

Very many are the pursuits of man; yet they all have the same end in view—the attainment of happiness. It is truly pleasing to behold the chequered scene every where presented to our sight, by the diversity of occupation among mankind; every one is pressing forward, though each in a different path, to arrive at what they fondly imagine is the summit of happiness.

The student secludes himself from the enjoyment of the pleasures of youth and society, to spend his time in acquiring that, which in his opinion, will render him happy. But how is he de-

ceived.—When he is in possession of that for which he has labored so incessantly, he finds that he receives no enjoyment from it; or if he does, it is more than counterbalanced by the evils of life.

The merchant consents to be confined to his store house, from morn to night; to be separated the greater part of his time from his tender wife and children; and to engage in all the confusion and bustle necessarily connected with a life of business, in order that he may amass a fortune, which may render him happy in his latter days, when he intends retiring from trade, to enjoy the fruits of his labors in peace, secluded from the cares and anxieties of a commercial life. But perhaps the cold hand of death may be laid upon him, when his prospects are fairest, and his wishes on the eve of being gratified; or by some unlucky turn of Fortune's wheel he may be deprived in a moment of all that he has been years in collecting, and be reduced from a state of affluence to poverty and distress. Or should no such calamity overtake him—though he may have been fortunate in all his undertakings, and by industry and frugality have acquired immense riches—still he is unhappy. He purchases extensive farms and splendid mansions, and retires to the enjoyment of his wealth. For a while novelty pleases him: yet he is soon deprived even of this slight gratification. The objects which surround him no longer attract his attention; they have become familiar; the hours pass away in one dull monotonous round; to-day is spent as yesterday, and yesterday as the preceding. Tho' he can scarcely utter a wish ere it is gratified—though he may recline on beds of softest down, under canopies of the richest silk, surrounded with numerous attendants, ever ready to obey him—though his table may be spread in the most sumptuous and elegant manner—still he finds no alleviation to his misery. He learns by sad experience, that he has spent his life

in va  
deriv

Th  
frien  
boyh  
with  
dear,  
and t  
dang  
the  
day r  
ceive  
gain  
youth  
her h  
all o  
soon  
off, a  
him  
tion  
and  
er b  
spirit  
fired  
to ba  
Fora  
gers  
ful b  
comm  
agon  
and  
ed to  
tal  
pier  
falls  
nam  
to s  
vete  
in th  
turn  
tim,  
from  
fello  
fate  
now  
pinc  
grea  
er.  
mon  
life  
and  
thro  
who



in vain: for happiness is not to be derived from *wealth*.

The youthful soldier leaves his friends and the pleasant haunts of his boyhood, where he has often rambled with "the maid whom his bosom holds dear," to join his companions in arms, and to undergo all the hardships and dangers of a soldier's life; animated by the cheering hope, that he will one day return to the land of his birth, receive the kind welcome of friends, again wander through the scenes of his youth, and fulfil his vows plighted to her he adores. But how illusory are all our dreams of happiness. How soon may the brightest hopes be cut off, and leave us in despair. We see him marching to battle; the recollection of his friends rushes upon his mind, and he determines that they shall never be disgraced by *his* conduct—his spirits are elevated—his whole soul is fired with ambition, and he dashes into battle with all the ardour of youth. For a while he is preserved from the dangers which surround him. His youthful heart sickens at the sight of his comrades rolling on the ground in the agonies of death, covered with dust and blood; till suddenly he is awakened to a sense of his situation.—The fatal ball parts his beautiful locks and pierces his temple—he staggers and falls, uttering with his last breath the name of her with whom he had hoped to spend so many happy days. The veteran soldier advancing to engage in the fight, stops for a moment, and, turning his eyes upon the youthful victim, exclaims, while he dashes a tear from his weather beaten cheek, "poor fellow, you have met with an early fate, *mine* may be the next." Where now are those hopes of future happiness—those expectations of coming greatness? Alas, they have fled forever. We now see him, who but a few moments since, was in the possession of life and the hilarity of youth, a cold and lifeless corpse; his heart no longer throbs with the recollection of those whom he had left; his bosom is no lon-

ger fired with ambition—the vital spark has fled.

Where then is happiness to be found? Are we to look for it in the palaces of kings or the huts of peasants? Shall we seek it in the cell of the hermit, or amid the din of the thronged city—in the dwelling of the scholar, or the wigwam of the savage? Is it in the life of a soldier, or is it enjoyed by the man who directs his steps in the peaceful walks of private life? In none of these situations is it discoverable. We can find no real happiness on earth; we must look beyond the short period of our present existence, and set our affections on something above the "affairs of time and sense."

I do not pretend to say, that there can be no enjoyment in this world; on the contrary, I believe there are some, who may be said, in the common acceptance of the term, to be happy; yet their number is small, and their pleasure of short duration. The man who passes his days in peaceful retirement, far from the busy scenes of a mercantile life, or the more dangerous ones connected with the profession of arms; blessed with means sufficient to afford all the necessaries and some of the elegancies of life; with the wife of his choice, and a family of beautiful children, may perhaps be said to enjoy as much happiness, as can be expected in this world—he spends his life comparatively in peace and gratification.

We come then to these conclusions: that we should never permit our wishes and hopes to rise too high, lest, if we meet with disappointment, we should be sunk too low into the depths of misery and wretchedness; that we should endeavor to pass our life in expectation of little or no enjoyment here below; and thus our disappointments will be few and less severe—and what happiness we may enjoy will, from its being unlooked for, afford a higher zest in the fruition.

## No. III.

## NOTES ON THE MIAMI COUNTRY.

A retrospect of the march of population Westward—whether we consider the numerous hordes of wild beasts which it has driven from their haunts and destroyed; the immense forest which it has swept from the soil it once encumbered; the many barbarous tribes of Indians—independent nations of men—which it has dispossessed of their “ancient domain,” and almost cut off from the land of the living; the great mass of civilized population which it has domiciliated on the hunting-grounds of these perpetual wanderers of the forest; the cities which it has built on the sites of their wigwams; or, the rapid improvement in all the arts of civilized society—presents facts unparalleled in the history of the world.

As early as the year 1680, Lasalle and a party of adventurous discoverers, made a tour through a remote part of the Western country; a few missionary stations were made by some zealous monks, to convert the red men of the forest to the Christian religion. Little, however, was attempted by way of permanent settlement, and nothing effected for near a century afterward; and it was then commenced by men of different enterprise, and for other purposes. The men who chased the deer, killed the buffalo, and fought the Indian, are still in the prime of life.

Soon after the first discovery of the mouth of the Mississippi, the forming of a line of “Posts,” from the mouth of that river through the wilderness to the lakes, upon whose Eastern shores some stations and settlements had already been made, was a favorite project with some of the leading men in France, and was much talked of under the specious title of the “Mississippi scheme.” This line of Posts had in view a double purpose—the first, the establishing of an extensive and enterprising “fur trade”—the other had in view, a less selfish object, the convert-

ing of the natives to the “Holy Catholic faith.” In the latter, the zealous monk had such success, that many infants among the Northern tribes were christened, and some adults confessed.

In prosecuting the plans of the “Mississippi scheme,” as early as the year 1699, a Post was made and a small settlement effected at Iberville, on the bank of the Mississippi river. Posts were successively established at other points; in 1717 at New Orleans—1730 at Vincennes, on the Wabash—1753 at Du Quesne, now Pittsburgh—in 1756 at Kaskaskia, on the Kaskaskia river, Ill.—in 1779 at Natchez—and at a very early period at Detroit, on the Western shore of Detroit river, between the lakes St. Clair and Erie.

The first permanent settlement by the Americans West of the Allegheny mountains, was not effected until 1775, near a century after the first establishment made by the French, yet the progress of the settlement about these Posts and under the patronage of the “Mississippi scheme,” was very considerable. The reasons are obvious. The men by whom these enterprises were projected, were dignitaries, of that class who felt but a remote interest in the success of the enterprise; and those to whom its execution was immediately entrusted, were menials, men whose great stimulus to exertion, as colonists, the narrow policy of their employers, and of the French monarchy, cut off before it reached the agent. Fur, and not refinement, was the leading object of the one class—proselytes, without much regard to improvement, were the objects of the other; settlement and civilization were matters of secondary consideration. In after times these Posts were used, first by the French and then by the British, as magazines from whence they furnished their savage allies with the munitions of war to assist in annoying their enemies and check the march of population Westward. The primary objects of these Posts, the uses which were afterwards made of them, and

the character of the people who occupied them, have long since been forgotten; they are now recollected only upon the never-forgetting page of history.

Previous to 1754, no person from the "old settlements," then "His Majesty's plantations," now the "Atlantic states," had ventured West of the Allegheny mountains, in the character of explorer, to examine the situation and fertility of the country. That it was extensive, all who reflected upon the general outlines of North America knew; but of its fertility and of the many beautiful rivers which meandered through it, they could form no correct idea. In this year Mr. James McBride made a tour of discovery to the Ohio river, traversing a part of Kentucky in different directions. No other person came forward of sufficient enterprise to penetrate those savage wilds until the year 1767, when Mr. John Findlay, with several companions, climbed successively the several heights of the Cumberland mountains, until they reached their Western declivity, and descending it, entered that fertile country since called Kentucky, and traversed its thick grown forests in several directions, killed the wild animals which it fed, eat of their delicious flesh, and returned safe to their homes, beyond the mountains. Soon after, Findlay made his second tour, accompanied by the brave and adventurous Col. Daniel Boone, of well known memory in the history of the Indian wars West of the mountains, than whom no pioneer makes a more conspicuous figure in the march of population Westward. In 1775 the first successful attempt was made at forming a "settlement" on the Kentucky river, under the immediate superintendence of Boone, at Boonesborough, by a party from North Carolina. Several other settlements were made in the same year by adventurers from Virginia.

From this epoch the march of population Westward takes its date. The

Allegheny mountains had hitherto been the utmost Western limit of the "log cabins" of the Virginians; and in some degree they operated as fastnesses against the inroads and depredations of the savages from the unknown wilds beyond, to which they had lately been driven. The policy of the British ministry, partly the effect of a monarchy, and partly produced by jealousy arising from the growing strength of "the colonies," had for a series of years rather discouraged the extending of "his Britanic Majesty's plantations" West, than given any stimulus to produce it. The new countries were in part claimed by Virginia, part by North Carolina, and part by Connecticut; some of it vaguely patented to a few noblemen, without any land offices, or any regular mode of making entries, giving conveyances, or planting colonies.

As early as 1749, a company was formed by some enterprising men under the name of the "Ohio company" for the purpose of making a settlement on the Ohio river; yet the prospect of success was so gloomy, that no settlement was made until 1788, in which year one was effected, at Marietta; settlements were made in the same year by Mr. John Cleves Symmes, at North Bend; and by Mr. Stiles, at Columbia and at Fort Washington, now Cincinnati, all in the Miami country.

At this period a few thousand "settlers" constituted the whole population West of the mountains. These were composed principally of that hardy, fearless race of beings, called "squatters," who, trained from their infancy to range the woods and chase the game, and inured to all the hardships and privations which such a life carries with it as inseparable companions, embraced the earliest opportunities of leaving their former cabins in the "old settlements," around which the hand of industry had begun to sprinkle a few of the conveniences of life, to plunge themselves again into the untouched forests, once more to enjoy



the sweets of a hunter's life. The love of their gun and game has induced many of these pioneers again to leave their cabins at the approach of more polished society, and float on before the tide of improvement, still enjoying indolence and ease, seasoned sometimes with want. This station, half civilized, half savage, always in the woods, and always on the frontier, they, their children and grand children, will continue to hold; and will move on beyond the reach and influence of refined society, until the march of population Westward carries them to the shores of the Pacific ocean.

The "new countries" had now become known, the avenues which led to them were open to all, the revolution had excited more interests, developed new energies, and presented greater objects of enterprize to the adventurer. The Colonies, like Cromwell paid their soldiers with the lands which they conquered. After the soldier had served his tour in the "tented field," and fought and defeated the enemies of his country, his labors were paid with a "warrant" for a "survey" in the country he had so nobly defended. To locate these warrants, the soldier had to cross the mountains and explore the country. The claims of the soldiers soon filled the country with warrants, and with men too, who had won them upon the field of battle—they were men of fearless hearts, to whom the incidents of the revolution had given a spirit of daring enterprise. The Indians continued to wage their most barbarous wars—the roads were ambuscaded and the stations besieged. But the success of the Colonies had let loose all the energies of a free people—the old settlements had become in some degree filled—the army was disbanded—the enterprise which it possessed could no longer be confined to the humble sphere which many of the citizens who composed it formerly occupied—the tide of emigration set Westward, and bore down all opposition which could be brought against it

by the combined operations of the savages.

At the commencement of the revolution, not an hundred Americans were West of the mountains, now a large portion of the population of the whole Union inhabit it—not a tree was removed for the purpose of agriculture, now it presents the largest portion of agricultural land in the United States. States and territories have been formed in it—cities have sprung up in every direction—the arts and sciences flourish—and all the conveniences and luxuries of civilized life and refined society abound. The accession of the Louisiana country during Jeffersons administration completed the grand scheme of Western greatness. The whole Western vale is most admirably adapted to all the purposes of agriculture—it contains scarcely a foot of ground which may not be occupied for agricultural purposes—at some future day it will be the granary of America.

The admirable system of marking out the lands into sections and townships, making the boundaries easily ascertained and distinctly known, and the unquestionable titles which the government secures to purchasers gives a confidence to settlers, which no former people enjoyed. The vacant lands are fast filling up—the tide of emigration continues to flow—the forest opens and the soil presents its rich bosom to receive the seed, and grow abundant crops. And the march of population will be continued Westward, until the rugged summits of the rocky mountains will no longer be able to confine the increasing numbers of the "sons of freemen" in the western vale—it will thence descend towards the Pacific ocean—the Savage—the Native—the Red man, who was first driven from the shores of the Atlantic—then from his several hunting grounds in the Western vale—and lastly from his last hope, his retreat beyond the mountains must continue to retire before the progress of *civilized society*, his unsparing, untiring pursuer, until uncontrollable fatali-

ly annihilates his race one by one, or drives him into the Western ocean. A melancholy reflection, a continent depopulated of one race of human beings to make room for another! Facts which the history of the last two centuries furnishes, tell us that it is a consequence which will certainly follow our uniform treatment of this remnant of the American aborigines. We can however, sooth our pricking consciences with the consideration, that their places are supplied, an hundred fold, by human beings who fill more important stations in society, and for whom our Creator equally made this earth, and to whom, and to all the human family he only gave it, only as they might properly occupy it.

The last half century swelled the number of population in the Western vale from the fewest numbers to that of near one third of the whole Union—the next half century will throw the unequal balance in population, and in political influence in favor of the West.

In tracing the history of nations, and viewing man in all the variety of circumstances in which he is represented—nothing is more evident, than the fact, that he was originally pure, and intended for a state of happiness. The first view we have of him, is delightful beyond description; placed in circumstances the most pleasing—greeted on all sides by the smiles of dame nature—charmed by the melodious notes of the early songsters, bidding welcome to the morning—warned, by the more shrill voice of the birds of night, that darkness approached—and met, which way he turned him, by the fruitful boughs, loaded with the luscious viand. We, in this age of trouble and vexation, would suppose that he need never seem melancholy, or show his brow wrinkled with sorrow. But, ill fated man! such was not to be thy lot. Although he lacked nothing for the support of nature, yet one thing he needed—he was as yet alone—no companion shared with him the joys,

or contemplated the pleasures of the day, as he reclined upon his grassy couch, musing upon what he saw and heard—no earthly friend was near, to whom he might impart the feelings of delight, which never ceased to be excited; when he turned him round, and viewed the beauties of creation.

This object so desirable was furnished—woman was presented, as the companion and finisher of all his joys. Now nothing was wanting, nothing absent, that could increase his pleasure, or give a brighter cast to his enjoyment; all things conspired to please, to gratify and spontaneously to contribute to his support. For him, the feathered tribe tuned their melodious pipes—for him, the Sun arose in the East, adding lustre to the enrapturing scene—for him, the goat yielded her milk—and for him, the earth teemed with abundance.

But alas! how soon the scene is changed; the very being given him, as the refiner of his joys, proves ere long to be his greatest trouble; like the blooming rose, which presents a charm, but conceals beneath a prickly thorn, woman proved deceitful.—Or, why should she bear blame? The serpent was the beguiling wretch.

But see the consequence; they must leave the delightful spot, where they had oft, in playful innocence, beguiled the fleeting moments—they must leave the lovely ridge from which they had often viewed the vale, as they enjoyed the refreshing breezes of the morning, or breathed the sweet perfumes wafted upon the gales of evening—they must leave those grassy banks, from which they had often watched the motions of the finny tribes, and admired the smooth and placid surface of the gliding stream—they must leave all, and be forever exiled from their native spot. The Sun no longer shines with continued splendour, but hides, at times, his face, as though ashamed of their weakness; peace no longer holds continued sway among the elements, but oft gives way to noise and tumult,

bustle and confusion; the music of the birds no more excites the wonted sensations of pleasure; and the earth ceases to yield spontaneously her fruit. All things appear to have undergone a change—the face of nature wears a gloom. Yet under all these circumstances he bears up, and stems with astonishing fortitude the opposing current, until Death snatches the tottering frame, and translates the being to another scene. J.

### THE LITERARY FOCUS.

Miami University,

OXFORD, (OHIO,) AUGUST, 1827.

The "*Focus*" would have been issued earlier in the month, had our printer not been disappointed in receiving paper. The publication of every journal in the Western country is attended with this difficulty, unless the proprietor happens to reside in the immediate vicinity of a paper mill.

*Erratum.*—In our last number, page 25, in the commencing line of the remarks upon the removal of the black population of the U. States, "*finest*" should read, "*freest*."

### SELECTIONS FOR THE FOCUS.

*"With care I glean, e'en in the well trod field,  
The scattered fragments it perchance may yield."*

He that would pass the latter part of life with honor and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of acting shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigour on faults which experience only can correct. JOHNSON.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind, must have invention in the design or the execution; either the effect must itself be new, or the means by which it is produced.

IDEM.

### HOPE.

White as a white sail on a dusky sea,  
When half the horizon's clouded and half free,  
Fluttering between the dun wave and the sky,  
Is hope's last gleam in man's extremity.  
Her anchor parts; but still her snowy sail  
Attracts our eye amidst the rudest gale:  
Though every wave she climbs divides us more,  
The heart still follows from the loneliest shore. BYRON.

Happiness is rather a habit of the mind, than a thing that depends on outward circumstances.

BEATTIE.

A man should endeavor to make the sphere of his *innocent* pleasures as wide as possible, that he may retire into them with safety, and find in them such a satisfaction as a wise man would not blush to take. ADDISON.

No custom, however absurd it may be, if it has subsisted long, or derives its force from the manners and prejudices of the age in which it prevails, was ever abolished by the bare promulgation of laws and statutes. The sentiments of the people must change, or some new power sufficient to counteract it must be introduced.

W. ROBERTSON.

Prosperity, that conceals the infamy of cowardice, robs fortitude of half its glory. It is *adversity* alone that can display the full lustre of a firm and manly character.

J. GILLIES.






---

**ORIGINAL POETRY.**


---

*"The spirit of poetry is not confined to subjects of dignity and importance; it may be found in a simple lay, and even in a sportive song."*—GREGORY.

---

**THE BANDIT'S BRIDE.**

Farewell, and forever!

Once dear to my heart,  
Our joys are all over,  
And now we must part.  
You scorned me, when needed  
Your kindness was most,  
You left me, nor heeded  
The true love you lost.

I never can greet you  
As one I have known,  
I never can meet you,  
As in days that are gone.  
Yet say, can I ever  
Forget you and live?  
No! faithless deceiver,  
Nor can I forgive.

Yes, ever remembered  
Those hours shall be,  
When of form disencumbered  
This spirit is free.  
When life's pulse, high throbbing  
With joy unalloy'd,  
Made us sanguine, confiding  
With success o'erjoy'd.

But those days are now past,  
And the eve of my life,  
Is with clouds overcast,  
With misery rife.  
No friend to console me,  
Unregarded I go

To the grave, the last lonely  
Sad refuge of woe.

MIAMI MINSTREL.

---

**GREECE.**

"Fair Greece, sad relic of departed  
worth,  
Immortal, though no more; though fallen,  
great."

BYRON.

Fallen no more!—the Grecian's name  
Shall emulate his father's fame;  
The Red-cross, once again, shall gleam  
Above the crescent; and the sheen  
Of Freedom's banner, once again,  
Shall glisten on her Attic plain,  
The war-cry of the Greek, shall be  
The prelude of his victory,  
When rushing from his native hill:  
The Turk shall hear it,—and the chill  
Of death shall be upon his heart,  
As cold as if the foeman's dart  
Had pierced it; and the galling chain  
That Greece has worn be rent in twain.  
Sons of sires whose life's blood flow  
Evinced their courage to the foe,  
Can ye sit calm and hear the shriek  
Of widow'd and of orphan Greek?  
Can ye behold the burning pile,  
And crouch and tremble all the while?  
Ye cannot—for ye are the sons  
Of those who bled at Marathon.  
The flashing of your scimeter,  
Gory and red from recent war,  
Shall be your off'ring at the shrine  
Your fathers worship'd as divine.  
Fair Greece, prolific theme of song,  
Degrading chains have bound thee long;  
Thy sons, renew'd in strength and life,  
Hasten to join the glorious strife:  
They combat for their rights; they'll  
sever  
The link of slavery, forever.  
Thy star of Hope, how bright its rays,  
Presaging fairer, happier days:

Thy star of glory too shall rise,  
And reach its zenith in the skies.  
The fame of the modern Greek shall  
be  
Boundless as that of his ancestry.

C. J. S.

CINCINNATI.

### FRIENDSHIP, LOVE & BEAUTY.

Since first I have reason'd and felt as a  
man,  
I have lov'd all that's lovely, I love all  
I can;  
I've been jilted and smil'd on by turns  
as a lover,  
And yet my wild race of mad folly's  
not over:

From pleasure to pleasure still heed-  
less I rove,

For, oh! what is life without Beauty  
and Love?

Misanthropes, of envy and hatred the  
slaves,

Preach that women are fickle, and  
men are all knaves;

But while I've a friend that will brave-  
ly and nobly

Stand firm to my cause, and a girl that  
is lovely,

From pleasure to pleasure still heed-  
less I'll rove,

For, oh! what is life without Friend-  
ship and Love.

Though Eliza's light vows were as  
fickle as air,

And when absent from Anna my love  
was forgot,

Should the arts or the falsehoods of  
those perjurd fair

The whole female page with incon-  
stancy blot?

No! Perish the thought that would  
lawless thus rove,

For, oh what is life without Beauty  
and Love?

This life's but a shadow on Time's rug-  
ged face,

And those hours how short that with  
pleasure we trace;

Then youth is the season for love and  
delight,

Ere old age gathers o'er us the dark  
cloud of night:

Then while youth lasts, with Beauty  
and Friendship I'll rove,

For, oh! what is life without Friend-  
ship and Love?

S.

*From the American Masonic Record.*

IN THE DUST I'M DOOM'D TO SLEEP.

—BY BOWRING.—

In the dust I'm doomed to sleep,

But shall not sleep for ever;

Fear may for a moment weep,

Christian courage—never.

Years in rapid course shall roll,

By Time's chariot driven,

And my re-awaken'd soul

Wings its way to Heaven.

What tho' o'er my mortal tomb,

Clouds and mists be blending?

Sweetest hopes shall chase the gloom,

Hopes to Heaven ascending.

These shall be my stay, my trust,

Ever bright and vernal:

Life shall blossom out of dust,

Life and joy eternal.

TERMS OF

### The Literary Focus.

Price to subscribers—\$1.00 in ad-  
vance—\$1.25 in six months—\$1.50 if  
not paid until the expiration of the  
year.

All letters and communications ad-  
dressed to the Editors, must be *post-  
paid*.

J. B. CAMRON, PRINTER.